

U.S. HAS SPIES IN THE SKY STATE SOVIETS

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"Suddenly I heard a dull explosion and saw an orange glow, the plane heeled over and, it seemed to me, the wings and tail assembly fell off..."

That is the way American pilot F. Powers recalled the last seconds of his espionage career. His high altitude U-2 reconnaissance plane crashed on 1 May 1960 from an altitude of 20 kilometers.

Together with it also crashed the hopes of the U.S. Central Intelligence Agency for using aerial spies for reconnaissance of the Soviet Union and other countries of the socialist community. The Soviet Armed Forces reliably protected the route used by foreign reconnaissance aircraft in the air space of the Land of the Soviets. And then those in charge of U.S. intelligence fixed their eyes on space.

Officially the Pentagon never mentions their space reconnaissance program. The Western press, however, in commenting on this aspect of the U.S. Defense Department's activities cites the following facts.

The U.S. began to launch reconnaissance artificial earth satellites in 1960. All launches were made from the Vandenberg Missile Range (Calif.). This range made it possible to launch satellites on a polar or near polar orbit. From this orbit the satellites could cross the Soviet Union and countries of the Socialist community very frequently. Between 1961 and 1969 the U.S. launched more than 250 reconnaissance satellites - more than 30 a year.